

Message Text

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12

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01

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R 081855 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5370

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

CINCLANT/POLAD

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E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, TD

SUBJECT: LABOR UNREST IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

REF: POS 0610

1. UNREST AMONG T& T WORKERS CONTINUES ALTHOUGH THE TENSION REPORTED IN REFTEL IS DIMINISHING. UNION TEAM IN T& TEC NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDER PERSONAL LEADERSHIP OF OWTU PRESIDENT GEORGE WEEKES WHO APPEARS TO WISH TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION. UNION AND MANAGEMENT HAVE BOTH MADE COMPROMISES. WE UNDERSTAND FROM T& TEC SOURCES THAT AGREEMENT ON FIRST YEAR WAGES HAS BEEN REACHED AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOW CENTERED ON THE LESS CRUCIAL SECOND AND THIRD YEAR OF THE PROJECTED THREE- YEAR CONTRACT.

2. THE WALK OUT, GO- SLOW, AND LOCK- OUT ACTION IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY NOW HAS SOME 3,000 WORKERS OFF THE JOB. THE GARMENT MANUFACTURERS ARE NEGOTIATING AS A GROUP AND HAVE TALKED OF AN INDUSTRY- WIDE AGREEMENT ALTHOUGH THE UNION OF COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL WORKERS (UCIW) HAS

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NOT DEMANDED A BLANKET CONTRACT. ON JUNE 7 THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE TRINIDAD & TOBAGO LABOUR CONGRESS ANNOUNCED POSITIVE ACTION IN SUPPORT OF UCIW. FOUR TTLC UNIONS, THE SEAMEN & WATERFRONT WORKERS TRADE UNION, COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION, COMMUNICATIONS & TRANSPORT TRADE UNION, AND T& T POSTMEN' S UNION, SAY THEY WILL CUT OFF COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES FOR THE INDUSTRY IF NEGOTIATIONS DO NOT MOVE AHEAD.

3. APPARENT WILLINGNESS ON BOTH SIDES TO NEGOTIATE A COMPROMISE SOLUTION AT T& TEC HAS GREATLY REDUCED THE POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT ACTION TO MAINTAIN ESSENTIAL ELECTRIC POWER. ALTHOUGH LABOR CONGRESS SUPPORT FOR THE GARMENT WORKERS IS BUILDING UP TO A POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE CRISIS , WE HOPE THAT THE MANUFACTURERS, WORKING THROUGH A HIGHLY RESPECTED INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONSULTING FIRM HIRED YESTERDAY, CARIBBEAN LABOR RELATIONS SERVICES, WILL BE ABLE TO DEFUSE IT BEFORE MORE SERIOUS LABOR STRIFE DEVELOPS.

MARSHALL

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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